



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 July 2025

by **D R Kay BA Dip.Arch RIBA**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/U1105/D/25/3366473

9 Oaktree Close, Exmouth, Devon EX8 4QL

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Graham Downes against the decision of East Devon District Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/0218/FUL.
 - The development proposed is a First Floor Extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is one of a pair of semi-detached bungalows, with hipped roofs. The appeal property's roof space has already been the subject of development with dormer windows present to its front and rear roof slopes. The property sits within a cul-de-sac of similar bungalow properties at a bend in the Close, leading to a tight relationship between the properties which turn this corner. The Close is located on an area of sloping ground, with distant views possible between and over the roofs of bungalow properties.
4. From my site visit, it was apparent that properties on Oaktree Close have been the subject of limited development, much of which relates to single-storey conservatories and the conversion of roof spaces using sloping roof windows. There was limited change to the profiles of roofs, with dormer additions at the appeal property, on the side roof slope at 3 Oaktree Close (No 3) and on the rear roof slope at 10 Oaktree Close (No 10).
5. The detached bungalow at 5 Oaktree Close (No 5) had also been developed. This related to a change of the hipped roof to a gable to allow conversion of the roof space. However, as this property is detached, and its gable faces the road, the change from a hipped to a gabled roof form here has had little effect on the street scene. The character of the area is therefore that of a low-rise suburban residential neighbourhood, with limited change to its original pattern of development.
6. The proposal would build on the existing gable of the property, raising its level significantly, though stopping short of forming a full gable, forming a small, hipped gable section. The increased roof slope would enable a further bedroom and en-

suite to be accommodated internally. A small ribbon window under the new hipped gable eaves, together with a further dormer window on the road facing roof slope would be introduced. The existing dormer on the rear roof slope would be enlarged, running almost the full length of the rear roof slope.

7. The proposal would remove the overall symmetry of the profile of the pair of semi-detached bungalows. This symmetry is particularly visible in views looking down the Close from the position of its turning circle. This loss of symmetry would imbalance the pair of semi-detached bungalows and would harm the character of the host dwelling and the Close. Whilst the increase in size of the rear dormer would not be discernible from Oaktree Close, it would be visible from the public realm in views between gables of the properties at 19 and 21 Mount Pleasant Avenue, where it would present an incongruous mass on the roof slope. This would be prominent, harmfully changing the property's character from a bungalow to a two-storey dwelling. This would be out of character with surrounding development.
8. The appellant has provided several examples of developments within the wider area which they consider provides precedent for their proposal. Having reviewed these examples at my site visit, I find that many do not provide positive design precedents. In any case, where occasional examples do exist, they do not form part of the character of the wider area. The appellant further states that such design adaptations are becoming a regular and accepted feature of the local roof scape.
9. However, whilst there are examples of such development within the wider area, the appeal proposal would not be viewed within that wider context. Instead, it would be experienced within the immediate vicinity of Oaktree Close and Mount Pleasant Avenue. In that context, it would be out of character with surrounding development and would harm its character and appearance.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposal would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. It follows therefore, that the appeal proposal is contrary to Strategy 48 and policy D1 of the East Devon Local Plan (2016) (the Local Plan) and policy EB2 of the Exmouth Neighbourhood Plan. These require, among other things, high standards of design that respect the key characteristics and special qualities of the area in which development is proposed, and to ensure that the scale, massing, height and fenestration relate well to their context.

Other Matters

11. The Council is at the Regulation 19 stage in the preparation of the Draft East Devon Local Plan (2025-2042), with the public consultation period having recently closed. Whilst the Council had referred to certain policies from this draft Local Plan in the delegated report, and in their decision notice, as this plan has not yet gone through the examination process, I have given limited weight to the policies referred to in the Council's report in my determination of the appeal.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal proposal would be contrary to the development plan, read as a whole, and that there are no material considerations, including policies in the Framework, that would justify determining other than in accordance with it. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

D R Kay

INSPECTOR